

AN
EPISTLE
FOR
UNITY,
To prevent the
WILES
OF THE
ENEMY.

By JOHN CROOK.

LONDON:

Reprinted by LUKE HINDE, in *George-Yard,*
Lombard-Street, 1760.

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Reprinted by Luke Hinds, in Great-Street,
Dorset-Street, 1760.

THE
INTRODUCTION

THE following EPISTLE was penn'd by that deep and able Minister of the Gospel, JOHN CROOK, when in Prison for the Testimony of a good Conscience. He has set forth, in a lively and affecting Manner, the State which many were in, when this glorious Day first broke forth upon our Ancestors; and, with much Energy, express'd the Compassion of Almighty Goodness, which gather'd and made them of the Household of Faith, Children of one Father, and united them in the Covenant of immortal Life; and also the happy Effects resulting from such an UNION.

The hidden and deep laid Snares of the Enemy, which tend to lay waste and dissolve the Bond of *Christian* Fellowship, that should never be broken, are clearly discover'd; and the Means, by which it is preserved, are evidently pointed out.

The INTRODUCTION.

The Conduct which every Member of the Body should observe towards each other, and their Duty in our religious Assemblies for the Worship of God, are copiously, and with great Judgment, described.

The AUTHOR (according to the Wisdom given unto him) has wrote in a profound Manner, addressing himself to a Mind enlightened by divine Grace, and not to the captious or carnal Professor; nevertheless, if that Wisdom is waited for, which influenced him, the Scope and Design of the EPISTLE will be seen and adhered to, and no Part thereof wrested to answer private Purposes.

Some of the Reasons which induced us to reprint this EPISTLE are; *First*, A Concern to promote, as much as in us lieth, Love and Unity amongst us in general.

Secondly, That all might be stirred up to a truly *Christian* Conduct towards each other, and in the Church of Christ. And,

Lastly, That the Professors of Truth may be awakened, and brought to a true Sense of the Solemnity of our Meetings for religious Worship, and our Duty therein, whether

MINISTERS

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MINISTERS or others ; that they may be held and concluded in the *Name*, which is the *Power* of *JESUS*.

And notwithstanding we are sorrowful Witnesses, that the Society has lately been stript of many useful Members, both MINISTERS and ELDERS ; yet CHRIST our Lord, who is the Head of the Church, and Bishop of Souls, is never absent from, but is ever with his Church ; the Faithful experiencing, that *Where two or three are gathered together in his Name, he is in the Midst of them*, Mat. xviii. 20. agreeable to his Promise, which is *Yea, and Amen* for ever, their Eye seeing their Teacher ; for he is with his own to the End of the World : And if we are truly given up in Heart and Soul to serve the Lord, the same Hand of Power, which fitted formerly to fill every Station in the Church, will anoint and qualify in this Day, and furnish to every good Word and Work.

We take this Opportunity to entreat, that Friends every where would guard against *Luke-warmness*, *Impatience*, and a *restless Behaviour* in our religious Meetings, though they may be held in SILENCE. And, if a Watch is not diligently kept, Meetings may be broke up, through

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through Inattention; unseasonably, or before the proper Time; which will burthen and grieve the living Members, who have been wrestling in Spirit, and waiting for the renewed Manifestation and Arising of that holy Life, and divine Power, which is the Glory of all our Assemblies.

As we apprehend the annex'd EPISTLE is in many Respects suitable to the present State of the Society, we tenderly recommend it to the serious Perusal, and solid Attention, of Friends in general, hoping it may be of Service.

*Second Day's Morning - meeting,
London, the 21st of the Seventh
Month, 1760.*

AN
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To prevent the
Wiles of the Enemy.

DEAR Lambs of my Father's Fold, who have been rescued out of the Hands of the Devourer, and known the sore Bitings of the Wolves, and the affrightning Roarings of the Lions, and the Craft of the Foxes, who made a Prey upon you, while you were without a Shepherd, and while you were in the open Field, and upon the wide Mountains, without an Hedge about you, or a Wall to defend you ; but every wild Beast, and ravening Bird, was ready to prey upon you, and there were none found either to pity or gather you, until the good Shepherd (from whose Fold you had strayed) fought you out, and brought you home ; some upon his Shoulders, and some drove gently, and others (who would have run away after they were found, being accustomed to wander, and in love with their wandering)

wandering) he constrained by his Sharpness ; after whom he hath had a watchful Eye, because of their Liableness to go astray again, to feed by themselves, and not with the rest of the Flock ; whereby they have been liable not only to be torn by the Briars and Thorns, but also to be bitten by the Wolf, and other preying Beasts, unto their wounding again.

O all ye Lambs and Sheep of my Father's Fold ! were you not all torn and wounded by going astray, and many of you ready to perish of your Wounds, and weary with complaining ? And yet could not but complain, and were even tired out of that also ; so that you did but add to your own Sorrow, whereby you made your Condition worse than the worst, by being your own Tormentors ; your Sorrow keeping you from Rest, and your Complaints from feeding, (where others got some Relief) and your Strength being wasted, and your Power gone, so that you could not shift nor flee, but lay open to the Spoiler, to execute his Fury upon you ; so helpless were you in yourselves in that Day : And in this State were many of you found, when the Shepherd of *Israel* arose to seek his Sheep.

Oh ! do you not remember these Things ? Was not your Grief unutterable, and your Pain grown to that Extremity, that you had perished immediately, if he had not found you when he did ? Oh ! how were some of you fled into *solitary Holes*, and others into the *Clefts* of the *craggy Rocks*, and were mourning there, desiring that your Eyes were as a Fountain of Tears, because of the *Wickedness of the Wicked*, and *miserable State of Mankind*, and there was no Helper found ! And others of you, like a *Sparrow chirping alone* upon the House-top, seeing over the World, with all its Glory ; and yet could not tell how to get

get rid of it, but still had an Eye over it, and yet could not break through it: And this caused you to *sigh* and *mourn*, and you could not meet with a Mate or Companion amongst all the Sons of *Adam*; and so inward Sorrow wasted your Strength, and outward Grievs consumed your Flesh; and when you went to break through, you were torn by the Briars and Thorns, that you could not find a Way to escape. And others of you, who had learned to herd with the Beasts of the Field, and could eat of their Bread, and drink of their Drink, and lie down in their Resting-place; Oh! how did the Shepherd chase you with his Judgments, and hunt you with his Croffes and Afflictions, outward and inward, to bring you home! And what Care hath he taken, since your Recovery, to keep you in the Fold amongst the Lambs, that you may no more find out any of your old Walks or Haunts, but be kept for ever to feed with the Lambs, that you all might lie down together, as Sheep of one Fold.

O my Bowels, my Bowels! my Heart, my Heart! and all that is within me, is pained for you, and mourns in secret after you, and cries Day and Night unto the Shepherd, to look after you, and take Care of you all, that none of you be lost, nor that any of you stray, nor be worried, nor hunted any more; but that you may for ever lie down together, and neither hurt, grieve, nor offend one another, nor harden those who yet go astray; but that all may be kept in the Sense of what (and where) once you were, and of the Love, Care and Mercy, that pitied you then, and healed and bound you up, and brought you home, and passed by the Remembrance of all your Trespases, and loved you freely. Oh, let the Bowels of the Shepherd to you, beget Compassions unto the Scattered, and unto one another, who will

B

again

again soon be scattered, if he should look not after you : For you were all once in that Nature, by which you were *Children of Wrath*, and in *Darkness* as well as others ; and wherein any of you differ, either from what yourselves once were, or from what others are, it is by that which you have freely received.

Oh ! Art thou strong in the Lord ? And have many great Things been done by thee ; and many mighty Men been made to fall before thee by his Power ; and the Host of the *Philistines* been put to flight ; and the Power of *Darkness*, and Satan, the Prince thereof, been withstood, and made to turn his back, and vail to him thy Strength ; and the Dead been raised thereby, and the Graves opened at his Word, which went out of thy Mouth ? And many who were bound, as in Fetters of Iron, have been loosed by him ; and others, that have been shut up close Prisoners in the Pit, where they saw no Light ; and yet at his Rebuke, and lifting up of his Voice, the Dead have risen, and those Prisoners come forth, and sounded out the Praises of that God, in whose Power you did it ? And hath the Tongue of the Learned been in thy Mouth, and the Weary been refreshed by thee, and the Mourners been comforted through hearing of thy delightful Voice ; so that the evil Spirits have fled away, when thou hast taken up thy Harp, and all the Minstrels and worldly Joys have departed at his Appearance ? So terrible was his Presence, and dreadful his Countenance, that no Eye was so quick, as to abide undazzled before him ; nor any Craft or Deceit so closely couched, but it startled when he made search ; nor any Paint so artificial, but it melted before his dissolving Presence, and scorching Glory ; so that all Spirits were discerned, and tried, and judged with righteous Judgments,

ments, in the Day of his Strength? Oh! how did the wise Men of *Egypt*, and the Soothsayer, Peepers and Diviners, with all the Magicians and Masters of that Crew, together with all the Merchants of *Babylon*, flee before him, like the Routing of a mighty Army, and scattering of all their Generals, and Officers of Command? How wast thou, and thy Companions, in the Strength of the Lord, like *David* with all his Worthies? And how have you, like mighty Men, by his Power, broke through the whole Camp of the Uncircumcised, to bring Water unto the Thirsty? What Service was too hard for you to venture upon, to relieve the Captives, and set free them who were bound, who, like *Sampson*, have broken all the Cords and Bindings of the *Philistines*, and snapped them asunder like a Thread? With many more Atchievements that have been done by his Arm, which Time would fail to record; but living Monuments remain, as Pillars and Standards reared up, to keep in Remembrance what hath been done by the Strength of the God whom you served, to his Praise and eternal Glory for ever.

For, was it not all by his own Arm, and his everlasting Strength, that out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings be might ordain Strength, and perfect his Praise for ever? Yea, was any Thing yours in all this Work, besides the Obediente to his Power? And was it not all his, that no Flesh might glory in his Presence? Therefore, O all you Children of the Lord (without respect of Persons) that have seen his Wonders, and mighty Goings forth, and have beheld his marvellous Doings, not only as Spectators, but Sharers in the Victories, and Dividers of the Spoil with the Mighty, whose Souls have been delivered out of Captivity, and rescued from the Land of Darkness; who have drank of the *Water of Life*, that hath been

brought unto you by the Valiants of *Israel*, through the Hazard of their Lives : Oh, do not you forget the *Sweetness* of the *Waters*, nor the *Dangers* they ran, who ventured through the Enemies Camp to bring it unto you, with their Lives in their Hands ! Oh ! how sweet was it unto you then, and how did you prize it beyond all the Rivers of *Damascus* ? Let your Love never abate unto it, but heighten more and more ; for it is not of a glutting or wearying Nature, but provokes the Appetite, and stirs up the Desire after more of the same for ever. For it is the viciated Pallate that blames good Diet, and the full Stomach that loaths the Honey-comb ; but the true Seed drinks the *Wine* new continually in the *Father's Kingdom*, and the Redeemed sing a new Song, and have all Things new and fresh, as the Water out of the Fountain, springing up unto eternal Life ; where nothing can remain in the old Channel, but is washed away by the running of the pure Water, that proceeds from the Fountain.

Hear ye, hear ye, O ye Children of *Jacob*, what is the Advice and Counsel of a poor redeemed Captive, once your Companion in Bonds, and now in Freedom : Oh ! as we mourned once under the Oppression of the Oppressor together, so let us now rejoice in that Love, that hath pitied and set us free ; let nothing stop our Mouths from praising, nor our Hearts from rejoicing, in the Ocean of eternal Kindness and Mercy, that hath delivered us. Oh ! let us haste first upon the Top of Mount *Gerizim*, opening our Mouths in Blessings and Thanksgivings unto our God for ever, who hath made and chosen us to be a People that were not a People, that we may keep his Statutes, and delight in his Law ; and then let us stand upon Mount *Ebal*, that the Curses and righteous Judgments of the Lord may come upon the Head

Head of the wicked One, and all that would divide us from God, or one from another ; and whatsoever rejoiceth in Unrighteousness, or delighteth in false Judgment, and upon that Root of *Bitterness* that brings forth *Gall* and *Wormwood*, (that nothing may escape the righteous Stroke of the Almighty) with all that genders to Bondage, or would entangle our Hearts and Minds, whereby that *sweet Peace* and *Rest*, and *Satisfaction in the Lord God*, might not be enjoyed, as heretofore it hath been : For the *wicked One* will be sowing his *Tares* in the Night of *Security* and *Carelessness*, and it will soon spread and grow, that thou canst not get it rooted out of thy Heart and Mind, but it will *eat, defile and stain*, that thy very *Comeliness* will be *disfigured*, and thy *Beauty*, which once thou hadst, will be *marred* by it ; so that now, thou who sometimes wast *tender* and full of *Love* and *Meekness*, will be so changed, that nothing but *Roughness* and *Envyings* of *Jacob's Blessings* secretly follow thee, with an *evil Eye* to spy out *new Faults*, and a Memory to call to mind the *old Infirmities* of thy *Brethren* ; whereby thou wilt have a *large Treasury* of *Evil* in thy Heart, which will be furnishing thy Mind and Thoughts with *unprofitable Matter*, unto the daily wounding of thy Life, and clouding of thy Understanding, and thickning of the Vail and Mask over thy Beauty : And all this may be done by the Enemy, under Pretence of Valour, and Witness-bearing, against *Formality* and *Deceit*. Oh ! how easy is it for the Simple to be deceived here, and the Strong to be betrayed, as through *Dalilah's* Flatteries, saying, *It is for Want of Love to God, and Zeal for him, if a Testimony without Delay be not born, and a Dislike shewed, against such and such Things* ; whereby the angry Part will soon get up, and quench the Love to Brethren, and drown the Mercy, so that all will be covered besides the hard
Rocks,

Rocks, and lofty Mountains; and upon these they may see afar into the Enemies Country, but cannot behold the *holy Land*, with its Inhabitants, on the other Side the Sea. And from hence, if the Watch be not kept, may even the *Valiants* in *Israel* receive a Stroke, and come to a Loss, by this Craft and Disguise of the evil One.

And then others perceiving it (against whom the Offence was taken) not dwelling always in the Love (that covers all) but venturing too much to take the Air, and to walk as upon the Walls (without the Castle) may soon let in the Knowledge, and taking Notice of it, which will beget the same in them; whereby the Distance will be increased, and the evil One will gain ground, that the Enemy will soon shew himself to the troubling of *Israel*; and so will the evil Seed be scattered abroad, and gender unto more Ungodliness, for want of a timely Prevention, both in the one and in the other: And thus may the Lambs of my Father's Fold be disturbed by the little Foxes, who should be taken by the Watchmen of *Israel*, that they might not wander to hurt.

Therefore, O ye Children, and mighty Men, with the Leaders of the Tribes of *Israel*, remember how easy it is for you all to miscarry, if the Watch be not diligently kept; for Satan will be standing at the right Hand of *Joshua*, to resist him. Oh! call to mind what is recorded in the Scriptures of Truth, how the *Man of God* (after he had gone forth and finished his Message, in crying against the *Altar* at *Bethel*, and after he had withstood the *Temptation* of the *King*) was slain by the Lion, for going from the *Word of the Lord in himself*, and hearkening unto the Counsel of the old Prophet, whereby he was deceived, and returned not according to the Com-
mand

mand of the Lord. And (my dear Brethren) *Paul*, a Champion in *Israel*, and Master-builder in *God's Work*, saw need (in the Bowels of Love and Mercy) that the *Faithful*, without *Respect of Persons*, should watch one over another, did (as Need required) say to *Archippus*, *Take heed to the Ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.* And did not Satan present himself amongst the Sons of God, in the Days past, when they were met together? And Oh remember, the *Serpent* got into *Paradise*, to tempt from the *Innocency*; who is the same that ever he was, and most busy about those who are chiefest in the *Work of the Lord*; for who was so tempted as the Son of God? Therefore *let the Strong bear the Infirmities of the Weak*, lest they also be tempted; *for we all stand by Faith*: And he that is most in the *Life of the Son*, is most sensible of the Hurts of others, and most touched with the Feeling of their Wounds; not slightly passing by, like the *Priest* and *Levite*, but mercifully pitying and healing, like the good *Samaritan*: For it is a Symptom of *Hardness* in him, that makes slight of the Wounds and Bruises of his Brethren, thereby pouring *Brine* into their Wounds, rather than the *Oil* of Love and Tenderness: Such Physicians rather help to fester, than cure the Hurt; and to increase the Pain, than to stop the spreading of the Disease; whereby a little Slip does prove as a dangerous Sprain, and a small Bruise sometimes to the Loss of a Member, and grieving of the whole Body; and all for want either of *Skill* or *Sense* (or both) in the *Physician*: Where *Skill* is wanting, there the Physician may administer that which doth increase the Distemper, and thereby disparage himself, and endanger the Patient; and where *Sense* is wanting, there Austerity and Rigidity is usually met withal. So that he which feeds the *Lambs* (and hurts them not) must

must himself be conformable to Christ, who is *holy* and *barmless*, and *separate* from *Defilement*, and *touched with the feeling of their Infirmities*; having *Shoulders* to carry the *Lame* on, as well as a *Tongue* to direct the *Ignorant*; and *Arms* to bear up the *Weary*, as well as *Feet* to go before them in *Example*; and one who ought to feed the *Lambs*, as a *Testimony* of his own *Love* to the *Father*; and wash their *Feet*, as an *Example* of *Humility*; not seeking *Honour*, lest he be infected with *Lordliness* thereby; and so by seeking *Preheminence* (by *Eldership*, or some other outward Thing) hurt the *Lambs*, and stop the *Simplicity*, that otherwise would have had them highly in *Esteem*, for their *Works sake* in the *Power*, but now will be hindered, because looked for; whereby the *Enemy* will get *Advantage*, of the one by seeking it, and the other by taking *Notice* of it; that *Prejudice* will increase, and the *Life* in both be hurt, and all for want of *WATCHING*, to be content with the *Honour that comes from God only*, and himself to be as one that serveth the lowest and weakest *Babe*, striving rather to be under all, than seeking to be over any; counting it *Honour* to serve; knowing sensibly, that *One is their Father and Master*, even *God*, and they have all but *one Lord and Master*; unto which, both he that teacheth, and they that are taught, must be subject, as the *Body* unto the *Wisdom and Direction* of the *Head*; so must all be unto *Christ*, the promised *Seed*: And if any *bold not the Head*, they run into the *Error*, and so out of the *Sense*, by which only the *Members* can serve one another in *Love*, the *Law* which *God* hath set to govern the *Body* by; for he that is most in the *Seed*, is most in the *Life*, and so in the *Sense* whereby the *Unity* and *Sympathy* in the *Body* is preserved; and that *Member* most grieves for the *Hurts and Bruises* of the rest, where

where the Sense is the quickest, whereby its Usefulness in the Body is discerned, and the double Esteem and Honour is given unto it by all the living Members, which is not sought by him, but given freely by others, because they are sensible of the Usefulness of that Member to the Body, and so is the whole *edified in*, and *built up* by Love.

But if, through any prevalent Humour, the Health of any be impaired, whereby the Sense is lost or benumb'd, that it feels not when others are hurt, and yet will continue to officiate in the Body, whereby the rest are grieved; yet in that Case it must not be ruggedly fallen upon, lest, through its own Unsensibleness, it hurt the living Members, without either Mercy or Sense, and so either make them grieve, or wholly unsensible also, unto the increasing of farther Discord in the Body; but rather Gentleness and Forbearance must be used, as by the Application (not of Harshness, and present Judging, or standing at a Distance, but) of warm Cloaths, and supplying Oils, used by a gentle Hand, with much Pains, and often Exhortation, in the Stirrings of Love, and Risings of the Life; and yet feeds not the Benumbedness, or Senselessness, but cherisheth the Life, and so recovers the Sense, whereby it is restored to the former Office in the Body, and more filled with *Compassion*, *Usefulness*, and *Diligence*, than before; and the other Members are now made more sensible of the Benefit of *Patience* and *Long-suffering*, and sees from whence that springs, that would limit unto seven Times, and how narrow and short it is of the Fulness of Mercy itself, that is unlimited, but binds the limiting Spirit, unto the perfecting of the Praises of the God of everlasting Goodness and Mercy.

And thus will the *Wiles* of the Enemy be prevented, and the *Body* preserved in Unity, and edify itself in Love: And hereby will the World be convinced, that you are the Disciples of Christ, and have learned of him to *love one another*, and in Love (as the Members of the natural Body) to *serve one another*, and to minister to its Benefit, of the *Ability which God giveth*, and from the Rising of the Life, and breaking forth of it, (as the Sun from under a Cloud) and not under a Vail or Burthen; but wait until the Way be clear in thy own Particular, and the Power hath wrought through and scattered all Clouds; and then, with open Face (and not from under a Vail) doth the Word of Life go forth to the cherishing of the tender Babes and Plants, and so there will be a Springing of the Life in all; and then he that so ministers, saves himself, and those that hear him; and neither wants *Milk to feed himself*, nor the *Word to minister to others*; but will distinguish in himself between the *Word*, and the *Milk* of it, and also between that which looks at the passing away of the Time, and to answer the Expectation of others in Words, (or the keeping of its own Authority over others) and that which dwells in the Cross unto all these Things, heeding nothing but the Rising of the *Life*, and overcoming of the *Power*, and so knows how to behave himself in the *Church of God*, both when to *begin*, and when to *make an End*; ministering in the *Life*, and reaching to the *Seed*, (and not the Judgment and the Affections only) feeling in himself when the *Seed* is raised, and the *Power* stirs in another; which Sense makes him cease, that the *Life* may speak in *whom* and *when* it pleaseth: And so nothing will be quenched, nor none burthened, but *Unity* will be preserved, and all *Lordship* and *Mastery* destroyed, and every *Member* have its Liberty, without being restrained by any Thing besides the
Power;

Power ; and so every one will prefer others before themselves, keeping no Authority over any, but minding the Arising of the *Power* in their own Hearts. For what knowest thou, but the *Power* may be *quiet* and *still* in thee (be thou never so strong) that it may shew itself in a *weaker Vessel*, and *perfect its Praise* out of the *Mouths of Babes and Sucklings* ; which may be hindered by thy Negligence, in not minding the *Power* in thyself, and *God's End* in exercising thee in *Silence*, rather than *speaking* ; which may be, either to speak himself in some *weaker Babe*, or to come forth in thee with *greater Power*, after long Exercise in *Silence*, and *patient waiting*, in the Cross to thy own Will, and all that would be any Thing out of the *Power* : And hereby the Simplicity in all will *guide*, and the several Gifts, given for Edification of the whole, will *shine* ; and no Candle be under a Bushel, nor any Signification of the Spirit resisted, but all will be as Servants unto it.

And so in this Order will there be Time for the *Lambs to feed*, in their green Pasture, as well as others *to be exhorted*, and the World *instructed*. And so will your Meetings be as a Feast, and the Elders sitting as upon Thrones [*Judging*] (not so much what Words are spoken, as what Life and Power is stirring) all laying down their Crowns at the Feet of him that sits upon the Throne ; and so will all take heed *how they bear*, as well as *what they bear* ; and they that speak, as well know in *what they speak*, as *what Words they utter* ; whereby all will be done unto the *Praise and Glory of God* in the Churches, and *many will rejoice to behold your Order*. And this is that Behaviour in the Church of God which all must learn, that there may be no *Schism* in the Body, but that all may be preserved in *Unity* for ever, and in

the *tender Bowels of Compassion* one unto another ; all being sensible what *Trespases* have been forgiven them by God, the *Father of Mercies* ; and they, his Children, will be *merciful like him*, knowing their daily *Dependance* is upon him ; and they have no *Strength nor Ability*, either to stay where they are, or to go on to *Perfection*, but as it freely flows from him, upon whom they depend every Day for fresh Springs, as the Babe upon the Mother's Breast.

Therefore, O ye Children of the living God, be like-minded unto your Father, in *Mercy and Love* one to another, and in his Fear to consider these Things, that in his *saving Health* you may be kept, and none hurt or bruised amongst you.

Meet in the *Faith*, and in *God's Fear*, that your Minds may not be suffered to wander, (because of the diligent Watch) but mind *feeding* more than *bearing*, every one coming as unto a *Feast*, and sitting as in the *Market-place*, in the *pure Light* of the *Sun of Righteousness*, that all your Souls Wants may be supplied, and every one return laden and filled with the *Milk and Honey of the good Land* ; that it may be known and taken Notice of by all that converse with you, or come amongst you, that you have been with *Jesus*, and have received his *Virtue*, from the Touches of his *Life* ; whereby you that come to Meetings, bowed down and heavy laden, may go away with your *Issues* stopped, and your *Burthens* removed, praising the Name of the Lord.

And let him that ministereth, first feel the State and Condition of the Meeting in himself, by the *sensible Stirrings* of the *Life* ; not judging according to the Sight of the Eye, or hearing of the Ear, but with righteous Judgment in the *Life* ; minding more their

their State, as represented in the *Power*, than by any outward Intelligence ; that so the *Word* may be divided aright, and not handled deceitfully, according to any outward Guess or Judgment, nor corrupted by intermingling the Words that Man's Wisdom teacheth ; but let the *Life* put on what Cloaths he please, and as it dresseth itself, so let it appear and go forth ; thou being as the *Trumpet*, but the *Breath of Life* must make the *Sound*, in what Order it pleaseth ; and so will all the Babes be refreshed with its Melody, and the Sound be certain, that every Soldier may be prepared to *Battel*, to *help the Lord against the Mighty*, in their own Hearts and Bosoms ; and so will the *Blessings of the Lord* be amongst you.

Let not Time *limit* you, but in the *Power* and *Wisdom* of God, wait to know when he gives *Leave* to depart in *perfect Freedom*, lest any go away burdened, by having something stirring in them, and moving to speak, or pray, or otherwise *sound out* the *Goodness of the Lord*, by what Signification the *Spirit* itself pleaseth ; that so you in all Things may *stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free*, not being brought under the *Power* of any Thing, but every one, without Respect of Persons, using your own Liberty unto Edification, minding always the Preservation of *Unity in the Body*, more than your own particular Ease and Benefit ; avoiding Singularity in any Thing, except by a positive Command, lest Division or Separation follow.

Let not your Ears be open unto every Word that is spoken, lest Dislike or Prejudice enter ; but mind the *Life* more than Words, that your *Unity* may stand in the Spirit that *speaks*, and not in the Words that are *spoken* ; lest the Affections be tickled, and a
Love

Love and Unity arise from thence, whereby a false Fellowship will be begotten, and held in outward Observance, (like the World) and so will Gifts and Persons come to be set up, and Death and Formality increase; but the Mystery of the Fellowship in the Spirit and Life will decay, and so *Form* and *Power* will clash, and *Discord* soon enter; and the Wisdom of the Brain, in the abundance of Knowledge, will set up a Judgment against the *tasting Pallate*, and *inward Feeling* by the Power; and so may the Power come to be *lost*, or *much abated*, because its Way of Overcoming is rather by *Suffering*, than *open Contest*; which hitherto hath been the Cause that so few have been on its Side in Ages past, the greater Part going still the other Way; but by your keeping in the *savoury Spirit*, you will try and judge *all Words*, and the *Spirits* also from whence they proceed, to the keeping out of all Distempers.

Let there be no *Whisperings* among you, nor that nourished, which delights to *hear* or *bear Tales*; but every one minding their own Measures, which neither doth nor thinketh any Evil, but judgeth that as a Seed sown to cause the Flesh's Strength to increase: For as that evil Seed is hearkened unto, it will beget a Fellowship in the prejudiced Part, unto the *cooling of Love*, and *nourishing of Iniquity*, whereby it will secretly spread itself, to the poisoning of the Tongue with private Smitings, and also mispending of precious Opportunities in unprofitable Discourses, unto the burthening of the true Seed.

Let no *Harshness* to, nor *judging of one another* be found among you; for your Mother, that brought you forth, is free from all these Things, swallowing up, and covering all, as the Sea the Earth, by infinite Depths lower than all, and unmeasurable Heights
above

above all ; so that all is cleansed through it, and compassed round by it on every Side, that nothing but *perfect Love* and *Purity* may appear, the Multitude of Evils being covered by it ; so that tho' they be sought for, yet they shall not be found. And therefore let it appear you are her Children, by *passing by*, and *covering all* with that Mantle which yourselves were once *swaddled in*, and to this Day are kept *warm by*. But if any Thing that is evil spring up in the Garden, let it be soon weeded out by the Care of the Owner : But when thou seest it either in thy own, or Neighbour's Garden, let not *Anger* nor *Fretting* boil in thee against it, but wait for *Skill* and *Power* to pluck it up, without Hurt to the Walks or pleasant Flowers : Do it not in *Haste* or *Wrath*, lest thou *nip the Top only*, leaving the *Root in the Ground* to spread more, and do greater Mischief ; and so shalt thou in Wisdom keep the Garden clean, thy Duty discharged unto thy Neighbour, and thy Brother saved from the Spight of the Enemy ; and thou shalt shine, because thou hast saved him from the *Error of his Way*.

Let *Anger* and *Distaste* be far from thee, not having any Place in thy Heart : Let not the Sun go down on thy *Wrath* ; but when thou rememberest thy Brother hath ought against thee, leave thy Gift at the Altar, and go thy Way, and be first reconciled to thy Brother, and then offer thy Gift upon God's Altar ; and so shalt thou meet with Acceptance from him, and thy Soul be preserved in his Peace, and thou kept in Unity with thy Brethren.

Let not an *Accusation* be received against an Elder, without two or three *Witnesses*, that so it may be established to be true ; and then in Love, and Bowels of Meekness and tender Compassion, let him

him know of it privately, that he may be reclaimed, and the Body preserved pure, *unto the Praise of God*; and so will all Things be done *decently and in Order*, and the Lord God of *Life and Power*, will appear amongst you in Power and great Glory, setting up his *Mercy-Seat* over you, and the *Cberubims* stretching forth their *Wings*, and covering their *Faces*, because of his Presence: And here will be found the Substance of all Figures, the Pot with *Manna*, and the Ark of the Testament, with the Rod that budded, and the Monuments of his Mercy and Goodness will be brought into Remembrance by the Spirit of Truth, and the Glory of this *latter House* far exceed the *former*, unto the Praise of his everlasting Mercy and Goodness for ever.

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F I N I S.

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